

The Family Times

The Worst/Best Newsletter Ever

December 25, 2018

You Never Know What the Day will Bring



*IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES,
IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES,
IT WAS THE AGE OF WISDOM,
IT WAS THE AGE OF FOOLISHNESS,
IT WAS THE EPOCH OF BELIEF,
IT WAS THE EPOCH OF INCREDOULITY,
IT WAS THE SEASON OF LIGHT,
IT WAS THE SEASON OF DARKNESS,
IT WAS THE SPRING OF HOPE,
IT WAS THE WINTER OF DESPAIR.*

Excerpt for A Tale of Two Cities.
However, this is the tale of the same city, and even the same family.

THE WORST BEST YEAR EVER: 2018 a Study in Dichotomies

BY ANNA RUGG

On the surface one might say that not a lot happened in 2018, perhaps that it was even boring. On the surface, one would likely say that 2018 was neither our best or worst year. On a deeper level it is both.

There were no pregnancy announcements, births, moves, books written, or companies opened. But neither were there family deaths, devastating tragedies, moves, or even any poop floods. On the surface, perhaps not much happened. But deep down much has changed.

This was a really great year. This was a really hard year.

2018 was a study in dichotomies. Life is often made up of two equally true but opposing truths:

There is good in the world. There is evil in the world.

Light exists. Darkness does too.

A small child can be capable of discussing college level literature. The very same child can make fart jokes with his next breath.

This year was both the smiling family portrait and the ugly cry.

I read The Worst Best School Year Ever to the kids this year, and it is hilarious. What the main character starts out viewing as a "bad year" becomes the best, and the funniest. I imagine many of the experiences of this year will become more amusing with age for us as well. The fact that "move the shoe rack" is not a code phrase but rather a serious direct commandment, for instance. Inside jokes almost always increase in hilarity as they ferment.

(Story continued on the next page...)



Ugly cry picture removed so as not to terrify small children.

A

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Our House



(The Worst Best Year Ever: 2018 a Study in Dichotomies continued from the front page)

Level up

One of the most memorable inspirational messages we've ever heard compared life to a video game in which far too many players were content to continue playing at their current level. Many players become complacent and continue on with little personal growth. The speaker encouraged everyone to not be afraid to push through and fight your way to the next level.

We've always felt our current challenges to be challenging enough, however, this year feels a little like we unknowingly leveled-up.

After years of learning the standard dialect enough to conduct basic business, and the local enough to figure out when they are using the standard word for *children* in context of shoes it really does mean *shoes*, we find ourselves dealing with Sisyphean administrative duties. After years of sleepless nights, the kids are mostly sleeping through the night, only to find new parenting struggles to be tired and humbled by. After years of trying, finally figuring out how to buy cheese and heat water, and generally finding existing here a little easier, we are subject to frequent precipitous inspections.



So many great memories really did happen this year

Remember

And so I write this article first. Remembering our year, because it was both good and hard.

I want to pause and acknowledge that.

Many of the great parts are recorded in the following pages to be further celebrated. Most of the hard things aren't, so as not to be a complete holiday downer.

However, this is also a note to self, and anyone else who is feeling like they'd rather stick their head in the sand than face 2019 head on. This is a note to myself to say carry on, do the next thing, continue to grow.

Not because we need another self-help help, a personal growth coach, or a flow chart to supreme self-actualization. But because this year, nor even this world, isn't the final level. Nor will we find our best self here.

Don't be afraid to do the hard things. He'll carry you through them.

Don't be afraid to reach the next level, with the bigger monsters to fight. He is greater.

Don't seek out a career as a coal walker, but if you have to walk through a fire, you will not be burned. He will be there throughout and on the other side, even if some of your impurities are left behind.

And so I encourage you also, not as one who is already apprehended, but simply as another pilgrim headed toward the mark for a prize which feels far distant. I encourage you to press on dear friends, press on.

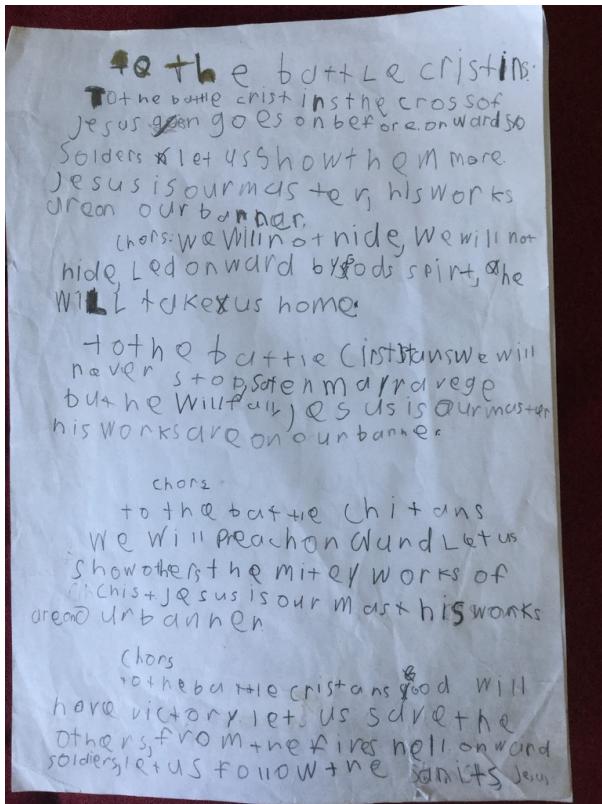
(P.S. But if 2019 actually turns out to be easier, I won't complain ether.)

**"YOU COULDN'T RELIVE YOUR LIFE,
SKIPPING THE AWFUL PARTS, WITHOUT
LOSING WHAT MADE IT WORTHWHILE."**
— STEWART O'NAN AS QUOTED IN
CHASING SLOW BY ERIN LOECHNER

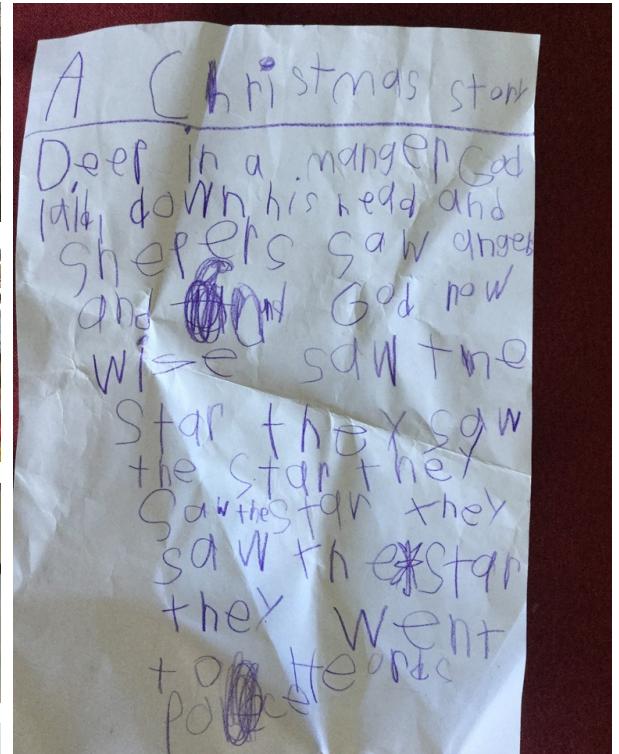


A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

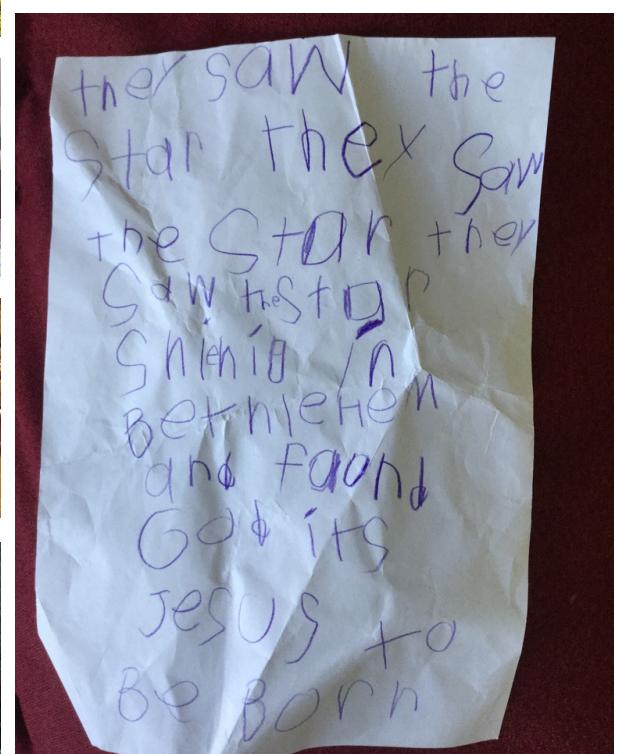
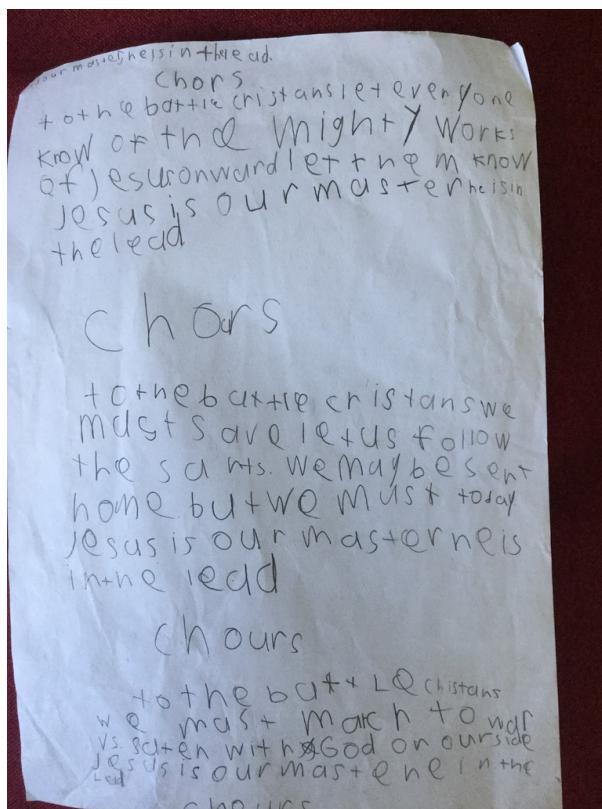
FROM OUR HOUSE TO YOURS



ANDREW'S VALIANT SONG



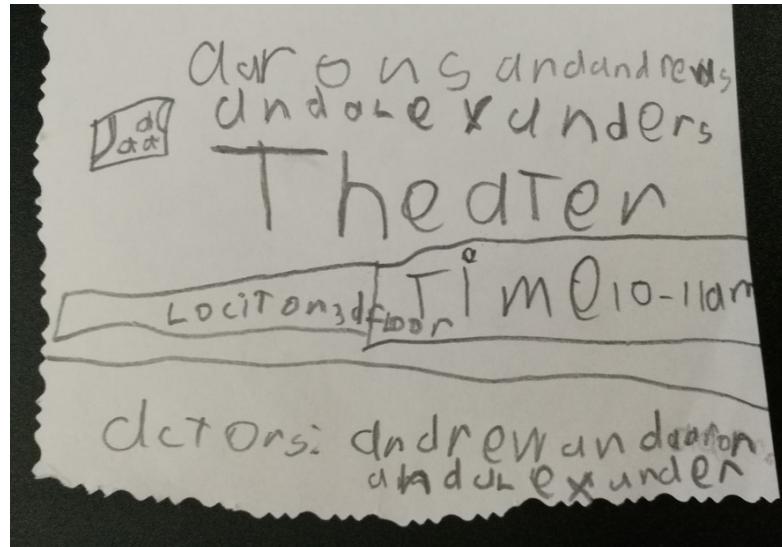
ALEXANDER'S CHRISTMAS STORY SONG



Amusement

**Abigail's W.C. Wisdom**

- "Pink potty seat for Mommy and Grandma Mary to sit."
- "Mom I have to go potty! It's going to be STINKY!"
- "I have to go potty. There is poo-poo knocking at the door."
- "But I don't have to go potty. I went potty yesterday."
- "I make a daddy poo-poo, and a mommy poo-poo, and a brother poo-poo, and another one brother poo-poo, and another one brother poo-poo, and a baby poo-poo!"

**I Love Lucy Independence Day Show**

This show starts after the **I Love Lucy, The Ricardos Dedicate a statue**

By AARON RUGG

Scene: Breakfast table.

Lucy: <puts pan of eggs on the table> Breakfast is ready!

Ricky: Coming, dear!

Little Ricky: <comes into the room> Hi, Mommy!

Lucy: Oh, there you are! We're having eggs!

Ricky: <yawns> Hi, Lucy. Are the decorations ready?

Lucy: Yep, all set and ready to go.

Little Ricky: Can I help with the decorations, Mommy?

Lucy: <chuckles> Oh, we'll see about that.

Betty: <comes into the room from outside> Hi, Lucy!

Lucy: < runs toward Betty> Hello, Betty! How are things going for the celebration?

Betty: Oh, it's going fine. We're going to elect people to do things, such as make games, decorations, host the party, cook the food. We're going to the Baileys at 11:30 to decide.

Lucy: Oh, we'll be there.

Betty: Good. Well, see you later. <walks out door>

Lucy: Goodbye! <closes door>

Lucy: Oh, I've just got to tell Ethel! Maybe she can help with something. <goes out side door>

Scene: Baileys house.

Betty: Okay, I'll make the games. Who can make the decorations?

Lucy: <stands up> I've already made some, so could use them.

Betty: Good. Now, anyone want to cook the food?

Ethel: I'll do that.

Betty: Almost done! Now, who should host the party.

Lucy: I could!

(story continued on Arts page Ar)

Animals



AT THE ZOO

BY ANDREW

We went to the zoo with grhama Mary and grampa Jeff i liked feeding the bear's because every now and then a carrot hit a bear eye or nose. i liked the parrot show because a parrot flew away when he he was not sposto (sic. supposed to). i also liked feeding the fish because they all tried to get the baby bottle at the same time. when we fed the tigers i tried to pull the chicken away from the tiger but he got it. ↪



Peter: finding and keeping him for a day

BY ALEXANDER

We found a toad on the street. We tried to catch it. I told Andrew about what it feel like. It does not feel good. I just touched him i did'it catch him. Aaron found out what toads feel like by himself. But Aaron sill caught him anyway. But Aaron used mom's good gloves to catch Peter. we put him in a red bucket and showed him to mom. she was really scared at first, but she held him when none of us boys would. Abigail really liked him. ↪

SAM AND ALEXANDER BOOK 2

ALEXANDER TO MOMMY AND DADDY

Do you remember Alexander And Sam funny man green robot in book 1 if you do well they are the ones we are going to read about if you did not then you have to read it again lets get reading

once upon a time there was a boy named Alexander and a dog named Sam

they got on a ship the ocean was had a lot of great white sharks when they got of they found a cat named mary

chapter 2

Sam was bringing mary to his dog house but then a bear came out of the woods then a lion

Chapter 3

Sam fought off the bear but then a army of lions came

chapter 4 ... ↪

"THAT MOSQUITO DIED
FOR HIS SINS."
-ABIGAIL (VERY
SERIOUSLY)

"Grandpa John, you
have boa constrictor
hugs."

-Alexander

"When I grow up I
want a guinea pig or
a dolphin for a pet."
-Alexander

"I feel like I'm an
alligator that
swallowed a
hippopotamus. And
a fat hippopotamus
at that!"
-Andrew

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Arts



Aaron's I Love Lucy Independence Day Show (continued part 2)

Ethel: Oh, that would be nice.

Betty: Good.

Mrs. Bailey: <raises her hand>

Betty: Oh, Mrs. Bailey, what is it?

Mrs. Bailey: Well, Robert got a raise today, so I can cover the expenses,

Lucy: Good! I'll need some kerosene lamps, and some firewood.

Mrs. Bailey: Oh, there's a store at the town

that's has a sale. Here's \$50.<gives money to Lucy>

Lucy:<takes the money> Oh, thanks! Well, got to run. <leaves> Ethel: I've got to cook the food. Bye!<leaves.

Scene: Home.

Lucy & Ethel: <come in room>

Lucy: Oh, it sure was nice that Mrs. Bailey decided to cove the expenses.

Ethel: Yes, it was nice.

Lucy: Hey, there's already some there. Well, I'll give it back later.

Ethel: Let's light it now.

Lucy: Okay. <takes box of matches from on the mantle>

Ethel: I wonder if it will make the house too hot.

Lucy: No, I don't think so. <takes match out of box><lights match><lights firewood> Aah! <jumps back> <drops match> Oh no!!!

Ethel: I'll get water! You go get some blankets.

Lucy: Okay!!! <goes up stairs><gets blankets><beats fire><fire spreads> Ethel! Where's the water!

Ethel: Here! <tosses water>

Lucy: Whew! That was close.

Ethel: It was close.

Lucy: It sure was—oh no! The floor's all burnt!

Ethel: Do you have any money?

Lucy: No, I used all on the decorations. Except for the food money.

Ethel: Well, at least Mrs. Bailey gave you some. And you don't need to pay— oh no! The firewood's burning!

Lucy: There goes the firewood money.

Ethel: Better call up some workmen.

Lucy: When are Ricky and Fred coming back?

Ethel: Soon as the fight's over.

Lucy: Well, I'll call up some workmen. You turn on the fights so we have a timer.

Ethel: Okay. <turns on television>

Lucy:<goes to phone><dials> Hello, are there any work men available? What do we need? We need to change some burnt planks.

Good. \$45? Well... All right.

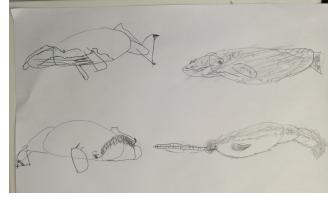
Ethel: What did they say?

Lucy: Some workmen are coming right over, but they want \$45.



Andrew's Art

Andrew continues to be interested in art and learn new techniques through drawing books and video art lessons. Some favorite from this year pictured below.



(story continued on Comics page C)

Books



Comparing The Sugar Creek Gang: *The Swamp Robber* Book Vs the Video

ALEXANDER'S REPORT

Same

- the daddy got drunk
- there was circus
- and bill colins

different

- Charlotte ann was a baby
- little jim was there
- bill collins picked flowers

liked

- one time poetry was as fat as a barrel
- big jim had a rusty cup
- they slept in a tent



ANDREW'S REPORT

same:

- poetry steals bill's and dragonfly's clothes
- bill catches big worms
- the robber had dark hair

diffent:
CIRCUS WAS NOT A GIRL!!
charlot ann was a baby
big jim had a mustash

liked:

- "how are we supposed to get our clothes back?"
PLUNK!
- old man paddlers story
- barry boyland had a gun because he had heard that ther were bears in the swamp

AARON'S REPORT:

Same:

1. They find Old Man Paddler in his cabin, and his story's the same.
2. Barry Boyland's story was the same, with the gun, the story about the bears and the treasure.
3. They caught the robber in almost the same way.

Different:

1. Circus is not a girl!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
2. It was Poetry that did the ghost trick.
3. They were not actively trying to hide what they did from their parents.

Liked: (Aaron hates picking favorites)

1. This may sound silly, but I liked everything except that circus was a girl and they were trying to hide what they did from their parents.

Knights of the Round Table

Book Club

Something new in the Rugg family this year was the formation of a boys book club which reads literature focused on learning traits of a strong man. After everyone completes the book the group meet to discuss what courageous masculine characters should embody in real life.



Wingfeather Saga

BY AARON

The wingfeather saga is a story about some children who are whisked off on an adventure. The main characters are: Janner, the oldest brother. Tink(or kalmar) the middle sibling, youngest brother. Leeli, the youngest sibling. Nia, their mother. Podo, Nia's father and retired pirate. Oskar, a portly book lover who is capable of reading 12 dictionary sized books in one night. Gammon, the leader of the secret force in Skree.



All these characters are trying to defeat Gnag the Nameless, who is trying to conquer the world of Aerwiar. Gnag is trying to capture the Jewels of Anniera(Janner, Tink and Leeli) because they are the only ones who can open the Fane of Fire, which has powerful stones that can make many more Fangs(gnag's minions)to conquer every little island in Aerwiar. Everyone is trying to brace off Gnag and save the Jewels of Anniera.

This is one of my favorite new series of the year. I really like that Grandma Mary gave them to us and started reading them when she was here. I liked reading by myself too, because I like to read really fast. However, I did not like the Epilogue to the last book the Warden and the Wolf King.



The Deadly Curse Of Toco-Rey

By AARON

Dr. Cooper and his son, Jay, and daughter, Lila, are called to excavate a burial tomb, because there are a lot of treasure hunters looking for fortune. Some of them are already dead, killed (they think) by the savages that live in the land. They search for tunnels, and Lila falls into one. It is fully inhabited by carvies, (flying slugs that spread slime that kills you) and she is covered in the slime. But nothing seems to be wrong, and after it's explained that the green slugs are harmless, they calm down. They look at a video, trying to get help, and find that a tunnel they've found matches that description. However, there are no guard out for savages, and they suspect something is fishy. They don't have any time to think, because Lila goes crazy! But after some guides explain that they've held the slugs when they're green, they ask the question: What is the deadly curse of Toco-Rey?



"Need chocolate!
Every day! Wear
pink! Every day!"
– Abigail (after
reading Gossie)

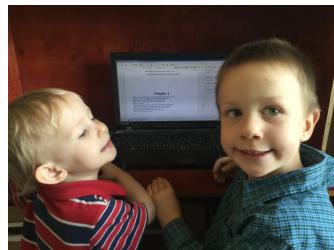
**"I USE STORY TO
POINT READERS TO
THE MASTER
STORYTELLER."
– CHAUTONA
HAVIG**



Themes in King Arthur

By AARON

Many of the themes in King Arthur and his knights are: Always defend a lady (unless she betrayed you, like when Sir Lancelot was tricked by the wife of Sir Phelot.) A knight should keep his honour, like when Kings Arthur and Pellonore jousting. It is better to die with honor, like when Uther led the army into battle, even though he was sick. The country is bigger than any one person. King Arthur not only led the army into battle, he fought in the battle.



Alexander Author

Alexander continues to be a prolific writer this year, penning many stories about imaginary lands and epic battles. Frequently seen characters are those among his own stuffed animal collection, including Sam and Friends. He illustrates his own works as well.

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Business

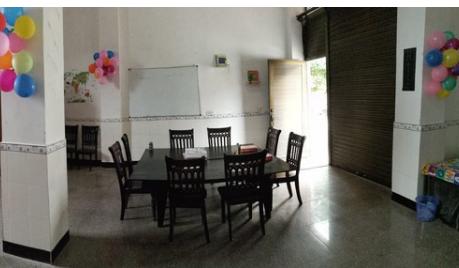
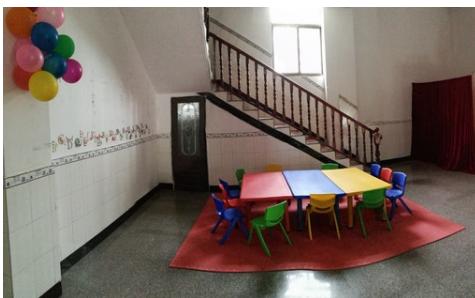


8TH WONDER OF THE WORLD

Playtime for the Rugg kids is often serious business. They spent many weekends at the grassy hill constructing this magnificent staircase.



Once it was finished Andrew declared, "Behold the 8th Wonder of the World."



Aaron's Intrepid Entrepreneurship

During the moving of 开心英语 (Joyful English) from its old location to the new, Aaron came up with his own business. He made his own sign and menu of services, each of which were a job designed to help Mom and Dad for a fee. His brothers were inspired by his enterprising endeavors and tried to open up competitive shops. Aaron had the advantages of being the first in the market and the only one who is allowed to make dinner by himself on his side.



"When's my birthday? In a couple years?"
- Alexander

"WE'RE SUPPOSED TO WORK, WORK, WORK, YOU MAKE A MISTAKE AND I HAVE TO FIX IT!"

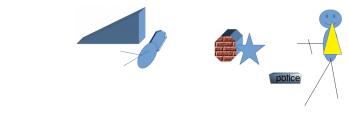
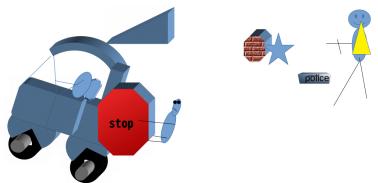
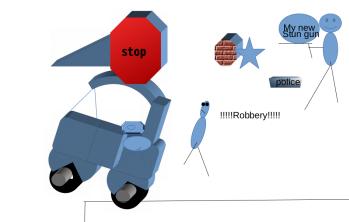
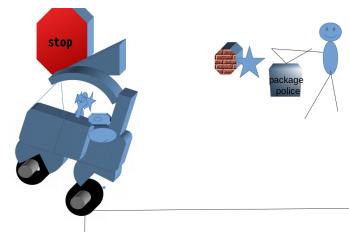
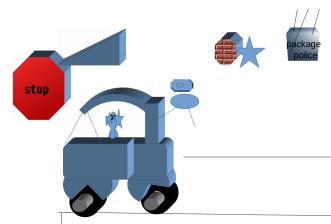
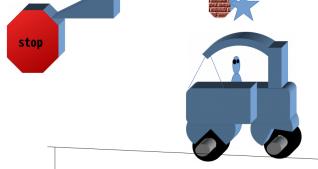
-ALEXANDER

Comics



ANDREW ENGINEERED COMIC

Big stop signs don't make good robbers.



Aaron's I Love Lucy Independence Day Show (continued part 3)

Ethel: Well, we have to make do.

Lucy: Yeah. <slouches> Hey! <sits straight>

Ethel: What?

Lucy: One of the trees fell by our house. Ricky was going to hire some workmen to remove it, but we have another use for it!

Ethel: Good!

Lucy: Oh no! He fell down!

Ethel: Oh no! 1,2,3,4,5

Lucy: Come on!

Lucy & Ethel: 6,7,8, Get up! 9,10,

Lucy: Ricky and Fred are coming back soon.

Ethel: I hope the workmen come soon. <door bell buzzes>

Lucy: That must be them. <opens door>

Workman 1: Get to work!

Lucy: We'd better get that firewood now.

Lucy & Ethel: <leave room>

Scene: Hearts.

Scene: Home.

Lucy: <comes in room> Well, that ought to be enough.

Ethel: Yeah. Hey, why'd the work men leave without pay?

Lucy: They have some. I left a check in their name.

Ethel: Well, we have the firewood.

Lucy: But now we need kerosene and lamps.

Ethel: Well, you can go get some jobs.

Lucy: You aren't coming?

Ethel: Nope.

Lucy: Oh, yes you are!

Ethel: Why should I?

Lucy: If you don't, I'll tell Fred that you've been doing men's work.

Ethel: Oh, oh, alright. What should we do?

Scene: Road.

Ricky: Wow, I sure got some loot!

Fred: Well, so did I, but Ethel left the sink on last night, and I have to use this to pay the water bill.

Ricky: Hey, look, the girls are coming.

Fred: Wonder what they're doing?

Ricky: Well, let's hide behind a corner, and see what they're up to.

Fred: Let's go!

Ricky and Fred: <dash into the alley way>

Lucy: Hey, maybe we can get some jobs in there!

Ethel: If we can, you'll bet we'll stop there.

Lucy: Yeah. It had better be a big one to pay for all those lamps and kerosene.

Lucy and Ethel: <enter>

Lucy: Are there any jobs?



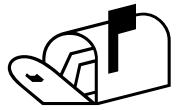
(story continued on Entertainment page E)

D

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Dear You



DEAR GRANDPARENTS

Dear Grandparents,

Today, we made almond-butter and Hershey's kiss cookies for Christmas. We put either almond kisses, cookies & cream kisses, caramel kisses, or regular kisses on each of them. The weather has been really windy and sunny, and we almost don't need to turn the heater's on, even at night. The wind blew the dust around a lot though, and it made me want to sneeze. We're going to make chocolate covered cashews too. Merry Christmas!

Love,

Aaron

Dear Grandparents,

In civilization we have FINALLY made peace with Napoleon and a war that recently started with china has grown very thick already, princess Wu of china demanded three units (an artillery, and 2 infantry) to attack Edinburgh one of our city state ally's, we quickly shot down the force but then she attacked boston with two tanks and an infantry which we shot down, then wu became SO ANGRY THAT SHE NUKED BOSTON. it didn't do much but we nuked guangzhou back.

Love,

Andrew

Dear Grandparents,

I like the ocean and eating Best and Omo's wedding. And the ocean best. On Sunday we hiked with Omo. The End.

I love you.

love,

Alexander

Dear Grandparents

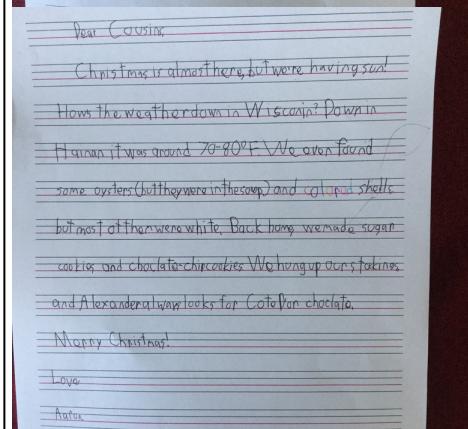
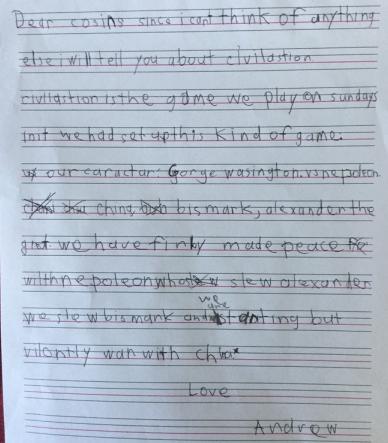
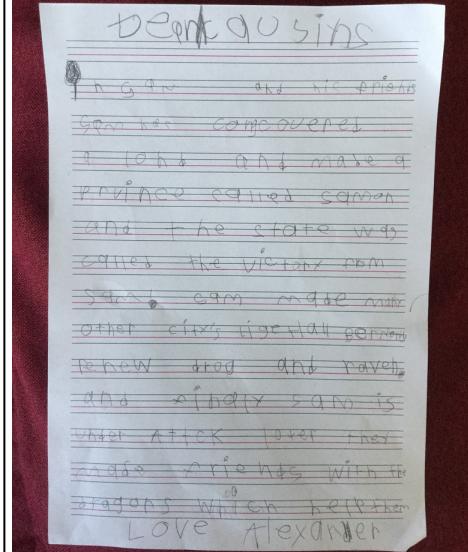
in Sam and his friends Sam concorded a new land and a province called Samon the capital was called the victory from Sam! Sam made many other citys like Hall Bermond renew drag and raven soon After Sam was under attack Sam took his men and killed 1000000 bad guys while he was moving in later he made friends with the dragons and also with the taget mars

Love Alexander!

Amusing Andrewisms

- "Never get in the way of an Andrew with a full tummy."
- "I like America better than cheese food."
- "I think America is the best place on earth because they put cheese in their jiao zi."

Dear Cousins...



THE TALES OF RIEEP

Cheetah-Bear Mythology

COMPILED BY ANDREW

Once upon a time there was a knight named rieep from the kingdom dart. (later to be known as cheetah-bear land,) he was a very great rebel because the laws were unfair at that time. At that time since he was a very great rebel, he was forced to live in the forest, unfortunately for him he hated eating birds and the only thing he could find in the forest was birds. Anyway when he found a dead bear he was so happy he forgot where his tent was. Poor rieep, he had to wander the whole night, and when he finely reached his tent he found that a mouse was camping in his tent! Luckily rieep always wanted a pet mouse and named him cheep (partly because he was white as a sheep, but mainly because even though he was in dart, his ancestor was Reepicheep the great mouse from Narnia,) they ... 

[End of preview. T

To purchase full mythology collection contact Andrew.

Available 2019]



Aaron's I Love Lucy Independence Day Show (continued part 4, and final installment)

Owner: Yes. For \$10 each. You have to dress up and stay still for 1 hr.

Lucy: Okay.

Ricky: Hmm. They can buy lamps, but not kerosene. I'll buy the kerosene!

Scene: Back Home.

Ethel: Well, at least we got the frames.

Lucy: Yeah, but no kerosene. Hmm, what else will burn?

Ethel: Wood?

Lucy: No, too flickery.

Ethel: Do you have any oil?

Lucy: No, we always use butter. Hey! Maybe we could melt that and put that in!

Ethel: Okay! <goes into the kitchen> Lucy?

Lucy: Yeah?

Ethel: You only have bacon, eggs, carrots, and one stick of butter.

Lucy: Oh. Wait! We could melt the bacon and burn the grease!

Ethel: That's a good idea!

Scene: Party.

Betty: <comes in the door> Oh, Lucy, the house looks just wonderful! Let's try the lamps.

Lucy: Oh, well—

Ricky: <jumps out> Surprise!

Lucy: Ahhh! Oh, Ricky, what's the surprise?

Ricky: I knew that you couldn't get kerosene so I got some for you!

Betty: Nonsense! Of course Lucy could pay! <lights lamp>

Ricky: Oh, I guess you must of payed for it some how.

Lucy: No, it's bacon grease.

Ricky: Bacon grease! But what did you do with the bacon! You didn't throw it away?

Lucy: No, I put it in the freezer.

Ricky: Good.

Lucy: It is really crispy, you know, we wanted to get all the grease out.

Ricky: How crispy?

Lucy: <goes into kitchen> This crispy. <holds up shriveled piece of bacon>

Ricky: <laughs>

Lucy: What?

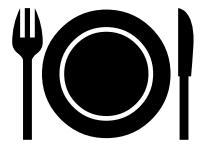
Ricky: I can't believe that you would do that! <laughs>

Lucy: You aren't mad?

Ricky: No, it's too crazy!

Lucy: Oh, Ricky! <kiss>

Scene: Hearts. 



Pizza Please

During both of the grandparent's visits we were able to go out to eat at pizza parlors. When the Ruggs visited we had the pleasure and the regret of purchasing Chicago Coffee's last six pizzas. There was at least one little boy in tears at a pizza party that marked the end of an era.

When the Fritzes arrived we tried a new restaurant in town, Caleb's Pizza. The pumpkin stuffed crust with hot-dog toppings left something to be desired, but the plain cheese was good. ●

Kitchen Cooks

All of the kids continue to get more and more helpful in the kitchen. Aaron learned how to fry bacon this year. Andrew loves to peel garlic, and will eat it raw. Alexander likes to mash guacamole. And Abigail likes to help with everything. ●



TRYING NEW FOODS

During our recent trip to Hainan, we all tried a number of new foods. Pictured above are watermelon and passion-fruit juices, oysters, and chicken poop plant soup. The first two were tasty; the last not so much. But you never know until you try. Abigail loved the watermelon juice the most, because of its pinkness. Aaron said the oysters taste like chicken in a shell. And Anna thought the soup tasted true to its name. ●



"Ice cream for baby! How WONDERFUL! It's happiness all over!"
-Abigail



When you haven't had a burger in over 2 years, it tastes amazing.



Happy Visa
Day Cake!



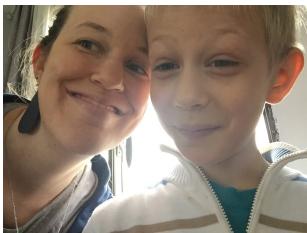
The food tasted good. the strawberry ice cream was as pink as bubblegum.

G

The Family Times

12/25/18

Games



GOODIES AND GAMES

ONE ON ONE TIME WITH MOM

In an effort to spend some individualized time with each child in a full household, Goodies and Games time was established this year. Each week on Tuesdays, a child would get to choose a game to play and Mom would get to choose a treat to share. That way each child had a chance each month. It quickly became a favorite event, and soon everyone was fighting over whose turn it was this week. Success?♦

"I'M JUST CRYING BECAUSE AARON IS STEALING BABY, BESIDES WE HAVE TO SHARE HER."
— ALEXANDER

AND THIS LITTLE PIGGY CRIED, WEE-WEE-WEE,
ALL THE WAY HOME.

"MOM, THOSE ARE TOES!"

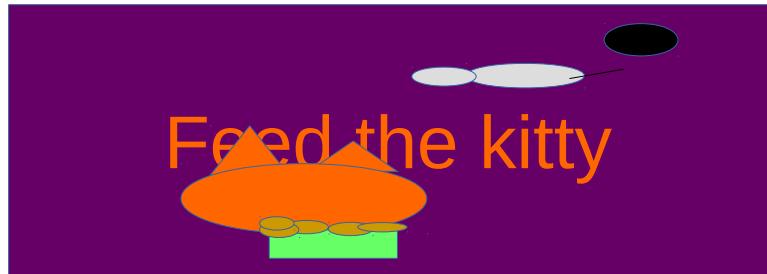
WELL I GUESS I WAITED TOO LONG TO
INTRODUCE THAT NURSERY RHYME.

Sam and His Friends

BY ALEXANDER

Chapter 1

Soon Alexander took Sam to a comfortable hole. He helped Sam with his furniture he got a small stump for a chair and a big stump for a table he showed Sam how to cut out self's Alexander made a wooden basket for Sam's bed. And found a fluffy pillow that Sam and his friends used to wipe their wounds from the attack he washed it in a river Alexander gave it to Sam. And made a litter box and made a button and said when ever your done siting on the dog potty press the button to flush. Then he asked Green robot to make a baby blanket baby ones were the only ones that could fit for Sam. He helped all the others. Then since Alexander lived on the other side of river he built a bridge so Sam and his friends could get across better. For then on Sam and his friends would be best friends with Alexander forever. One day Sam and Alexander met each other on the bridge Alexander was carrying a purple game it was called *feed the kitty* in orange letters Alexander asked, "Do you want to play?"

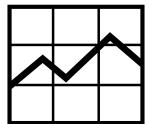


Sam said, "Yes please if you will tell me how?" he nodded Sam listened quietly he found out that to play was simple

1. roll the dice bowl means put a mouse in the green bowl mouse means get a mouse from bowl
2. cat means you do nothing arrow means pass one mouse mouse to a player to win you have to have mice and every one has none ♦

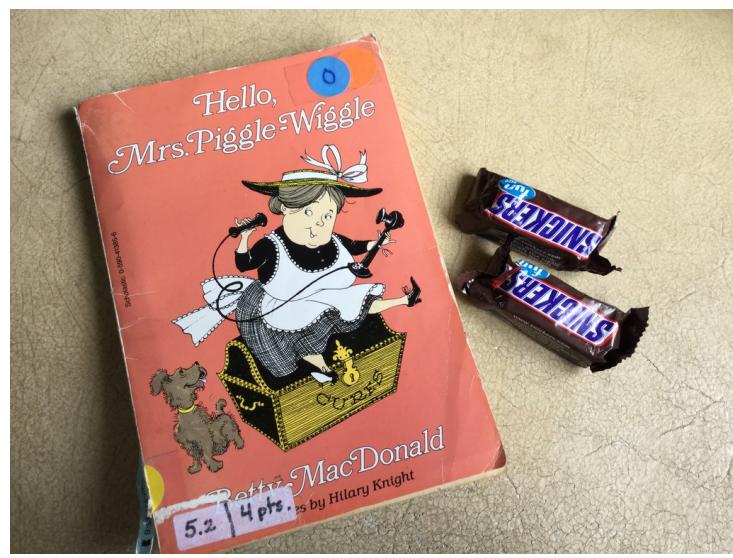
(Excerpt from Sam and His Friends Novel, by Alexander Rugg)

Health



Sunny Vitamin D

The weather this November in Luoping was excellent for getting outside, playing, and making some vital vitamin D. The winter already feels a little shorter with this great start. The kids love getting outside and digging in the dirt/gravel.



Final Exam: If Mrs. Piggle Wiggle gave you some of these what would they be?
 Boys: Obedience pills? Can we try it?

**"I could have helped you remember
 if I hadn't forgot."**
 —Alexander

Laughter Medicine

BY ALEXANDER

- “The bag opened, and now there’s dirt in my tea.”
- “You know the best part of being a man? You don’t have to dry all the dishes.”
- “Look Mom made two-player bread.” (Mom cut the piece of bread in half)
- “My bottom is telling me I have to go poo poo.”
- “Mom, can I have some bread? I ONLY had breakfast!” (at 9:15AM)
- “You can never tell a woman’s attitude.”
- “I’m an Impecatory Chicken!”
- “When I’m a man, can I bring my stuffed animals along to my house?”
- “I think the first guy born in the vegetable family was a banana.”



“Looks like we don’t have to tell you to get down and relax.”

Chinglish found on KFC’s squatly potty bathroom.



THESE GUYS TOOK THEIR FISHY OIL!



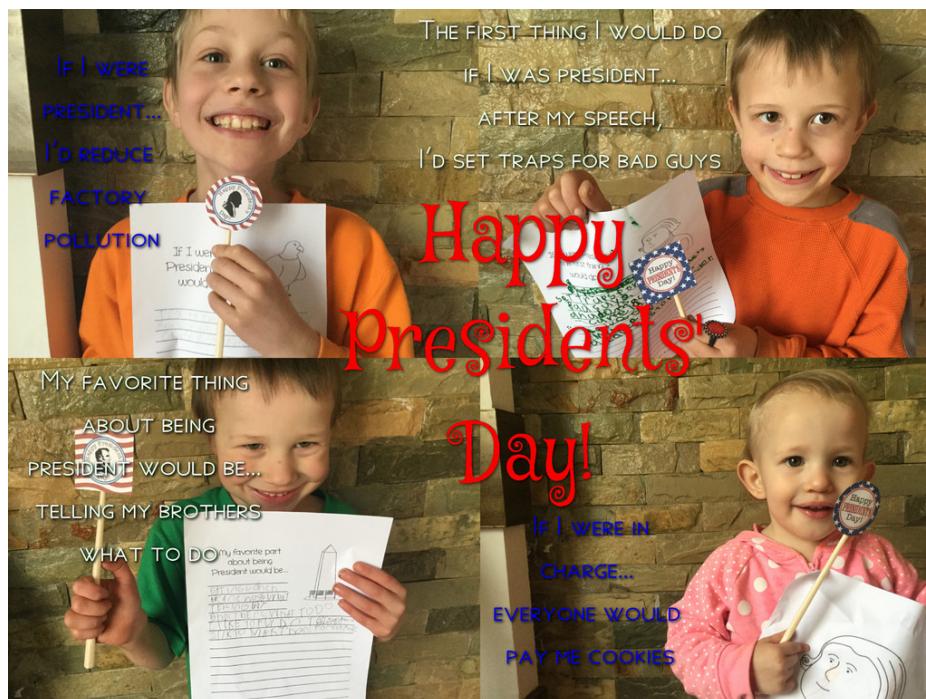
The best thing at the local pharmacy



ALEXANDER'S FRIENDS

By ALEXANDER

Once upon a time 8 Friends Alexander dinosaur savie tongaramgo Lamy rainbowbare tiger greenrobot were playing together out in the garden when Nate Alexander's dad came into the garden collecting potato's and tomato's and carrot's for dinner in the middle of the night crept the door open and then crept it closed then ran a ...



ABIGAIL'S APHORISMS

- "Read God stories mommy!"
- "Oh! No! Goliath fall down!"
- "Gaily just like Mommy. Brothers just like Daddy."
- "Baby love Jesus. And Dander love Jesus. And Andrew love Jesus. And Aaron love Jesus. And Mommy love Jesus. And Daddy love Jesus."
- "No, don't stop now!!! Another one story! Another one story!"
- "I love you Mommy." "I love you too, Abigail." "I love you two-one-one, Mommy!"



Getting Ready in the Morning
and Up Pops My Mini Me
LOOK AT THE PRETTY ABIGAIL!
"LOOK, PRETTY MOMMY!"



THE DREW CARRIER

BY NATHANIEL FRITZ

When Nathaniel and Mary picked up tickets to a taping of The Price Is Right for their vacation to Los Angeles in August, they were just hoping they would get to see someone play Plinko on that show. Actually getting on as a contestant was such a pipe dream that it wasn't practical to think about it actually happening.

Well, it actually happened. Mary dazzled the producers before the show and wound up being the second person called to "Come On Down!" Before they knew it, she was up on stage playing for a car. Then playing for the Showcase Showdown. Then actually WINNING the showcase showdown.

Mary won a 2018 Chevy Sonic in the Showcase on The Price Is Right (along with a hot tub and designer sunglasses that were declined for tax liability reasons) - the episode aired on September 20th and the car was delivered to Nathaniel and Mary in late October. This allowed them to gracefully send their 2000 Toyota Sienna off to Minivan Heaven and also gave them a fun story they can tell for the rest of their lives.



Work Breight, Work Right

Mary also has a great year professionally—she started working in the Life Enrichment department at The Bluffs nursing home in Columbia in January and made such an immediate impact that she was named Department Employee of the Year in December.

Nathaniel continues to work for Veterans United Home Loans as an account manager and helped over 200 veterans close on their home loans in 2018.



Their two dogs, Penny and Kermit, remain as energetic, pugnacious, crazy, loyal and lovable as ever.



MY FAVORITE THING WE DID THIS YEAR

By AARON

My favorite thing we did this year was go to the ocean. We saw a bunch of smaller boats and three much bigger ships. There was a bunch of shells, and some bigger shells in the ocean. Our driver caught a pufferfish. Dad found some colored shells. We didn't wear our swimsuits so we had to wear them for the rest of the day.



GOD IS OUR TOWER

TYPED BY ALEXANDER (HIS FAVORITE SONG THIS YEAR)

the lord liveth and blessed be my
rock and let the God of my salvation
be exalted
the lord liveth and blessed be my
rock and let the God of my salvation
be exalted

Our Trip To The Three Gorges.

By AARON

We rode a boat through 3 Gorges. Sometimes it rained and sometimes it shone, and when the sun was out the cliffs looked brighter. The cliffs varied in color, sometimes it was blue, sometimes orange, sometimes it was a really dark blue, and sometimes black. The water was mostly clear, but in some places it looked like the someone forgot where the landfill was. The trip was really long, and we had to climb a lot of stairs to get water.



“I have to wear this (sunscreen) so I don’t turn out like grandpa.”

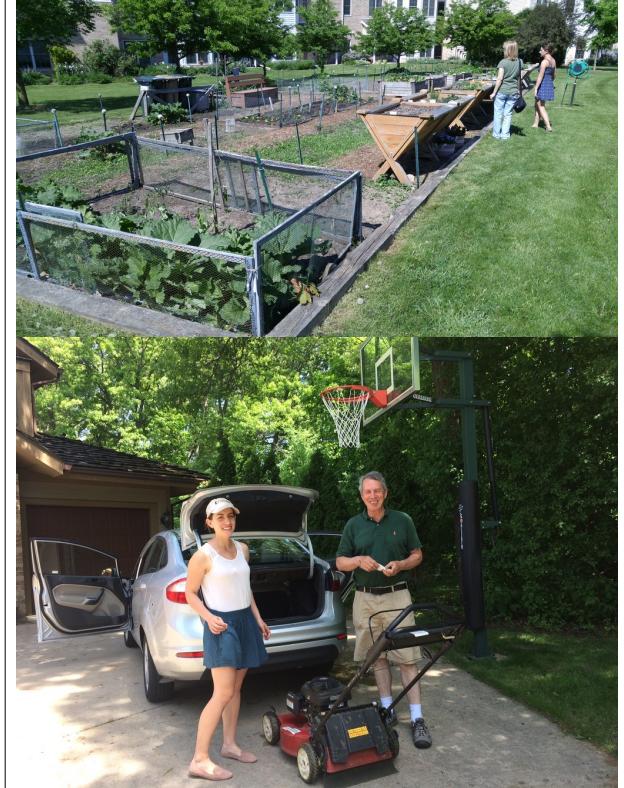
-Alexander



Just the Facts: Year End News 2018

By CALEB RUGG

- **Joanna started a new job at Illinois Masonic hospital so her commute is no longer 1.5 hours in the car each way, but a short 25 train ride. And she's working in a trauma unit which has been exciting!**
- **We went to Arizona for Joanna's cousins wedding and went hiking now in the mountains. It was a lot of fun, but very hot, which was less fun.**
- **We also go to Madison quite often for some reason. :)**



MOVING TO MADISON

This year Liz and Brent moved to Madison, WI this year. This has allowed Liz to better pursue her horticultural ambitions, and help Grandpa Jeff with Ben's pre-move yard work in her spare time. *



Convivial family dinner. No, Caleb and Jo haven't officially moved to Madison yet. But perhaps such feasting will persuade them....



TREMENDOUS TWO: ABIGAIL IS 2 AND CELEBRATES WITH 2 BIRTHDAY PARTIES

The Rugg grandparents were here to celebrate right before Abigail turned 2, so 2 pink cakes were in order. Abigail is a very sweet two-year-old who loves pink, sparkles, and everything girly. Because she has three older brothers, this girlishness is tempered with a love for sword fighting and dragon slaying. 



11 years and still
happily counting...

TERRIFIC TEN

Aaron is becoming an awesome young man, if a bit more sarcastic than ever. While his parents are still trying to figure out how they are old enough to have a child a decade old he says, "Why it's just 9+1?"

Aaron still loves chess, but has a growing interest in programming as well. He is a voracious reader and we lost count of how many books he has read this year. 



Nifty Nine

Andrew is a very neat nine-year-old who chose to have an Ivanhoe birthday party filled with knights and castles. There was also a trip to the new KFC for chicken nuggets and sliding time. The next day, there was also a trip to the play place. Andrew's other interests include football, bike riding, computer programming, and art. Out of all the children, Andrew is the most like his daddy. 



SPECTACULAR SIX

Fun and funny man Alexander is a super six-year-old. He is perhaps the most outgoing of all the Rugg children, he will talk to anyone he feels is listening to him for hours. This year he learned how to ride a bike without training wheels. 



*We better pay
attention to this
beautiful life, or
we'll blink, and it
will be one of
their weddings.*

"I don't need to be perfect only perfectly loved."
-Holly Gerth, You're Already Amazing

**"Obsessed people orient their lives around eternity;
they are not fixed only on what is here in front of them."**
-Francis Chan, Crazy Love

**"How we like to linger on the stage of memories!
Memories romanticized by hindsight and comforting
because of it."** -Mary J. MacLeod, Call the Nurse

Sports



ADVENTURE

By ALEXANDER AGE 6

Once in a house Lived a mom and a dad. And there was 3 boys and a girl. It was a sunny Sunday. The dad and the children went...

on an adventure...



Aaron's favorite sport is still cerebral, and he enjoys challenging most adults two at a time.



"Baby do it! Baby do it!"



**"Come on Dad,
let's wrestle!"**



**"When I'm a teenager I'll be
a squire, and when I'm a
man I'll be a knight."**

SW

The Family Times
12/25/18

Style Watch



Abigail's first haircut



Maximum Pinkification



"YOU PRETTY
MOMMY!
YOU THE BLUE
PRINCESS!
I THE PINK
PRINCESS!"



"IF YOU CAN'T FIND HAPPINESS IN THE UGLINESS,
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO FIND IT IN THE BEAUTY
EITHER." —CHIP AND JOANNA GAINES, THE
MAGNOLIA STORY

Grandma Sharla Shirts

The kids most worn outfits continue to be from the Grandma Sharla design line. Lovingly and durably crafted, they have already taken a lot of use and abuse. Taking them off only when they are deemed unfit for public viewing, these three super hero like shirts and sparkly heart dress are the attire of choice of all four Rugrats. And siblings agreement is akin to a near miracle. ♫ ♫ ♫ ♫



Yo-Yo: "WE ALMOST
LOOK LIKE TWINS
TODAY."
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How a 6-year-old boy dresses up his
stuffed puppy.



All armor and
weapons.



WHEN I WAS LITTLE
I NEVER THOUGHT
EYEBROWS WOULD
BE THIS IMPORTANT

How a 2-year-old girl
dresses up her
stuffed puppy.



Lots of jewelry and,
because of brothers,
a pink sword.



Abigail's First
Pigtails

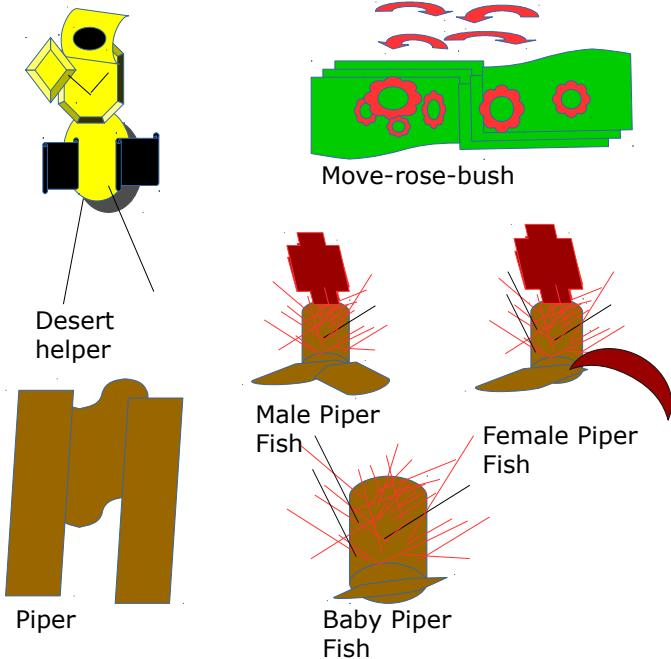
Tabloids



1. Form and shape.

The basic thing to know about cheetah-bear land is how things look. Of course that is in all worlds including Anthrops but it is the most basic in cheetah-bear land.

Here are some pictures of animals, plants, and things,:



2. Food and how.

This chapter tells about the food and how to eat it.

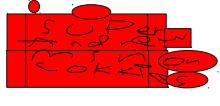
1. Maggot bear meat and fried tapple rings.

This is really a favorite. The whipped cream is not mentioned in it's name however.

Recipe:

kill a maggot bear,  find a move-rose-bush,

pull a bud off, then pull the orange apple thing you see out, that's a

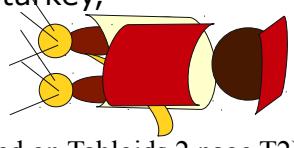
tapple, now whip the cream and bake it. 

2.super Andrew minion cookies. Eat them with a fork or you have to use the nose brush to get the chocolate chips out of your nose.

3.pirates delight. get a turkey,

cook it, wrap it in a

hot dog bun and

put ketchup on it. 

(continued on Tabloids 2 page T2)

More about

CHEETAH

Bear

Land

(there's more!)

1. form and shape.
2. Food and how.
3. Riding and flying.
4. Ouch and not.
5. Dangerous and not.
6. Fun and games.
7. Ancient legends, legends, and tales.
8. Extra!.

The Bearded Lady

EVERY TIME

ABIGAIL DISCOVERS A STRAY HAIR ON HER FACE SHE SAYS,
"OH, NO! A BEARD!"



MYSTERIOUS CHAPTER 4 IS MISSING!

Chapter 5

in this chapter ☧ = dangerous
(= not. dž = very dangerous.

- Cheetah-bear skunk.
Hibernates in the summer.

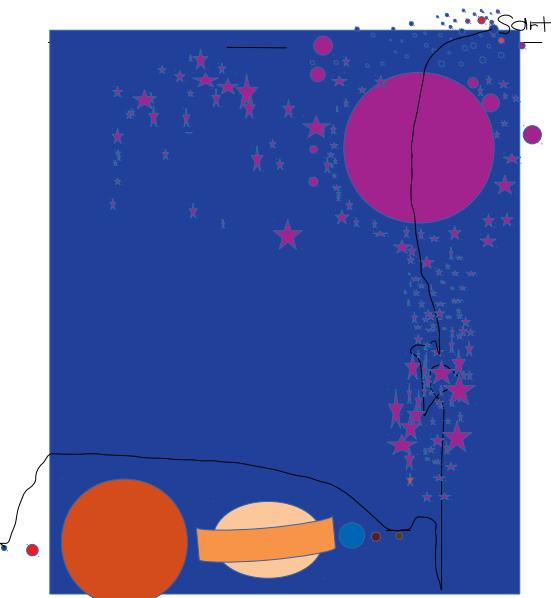
Weapons:
1. acid taking the place of the
stink the ones here shoot.

2.only able to be seen when hibernating or dead or by the shadow above it. 3.razor sharp claws. 4.tongue that freezes its victims.

To keep off the razor
sharp claws and acid wear chain
mail and a big leather coat, the
tongue that freezes its victims
will be easier see below,
`
neck/bone

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ SO
for the tongue they would bend
the whole body!.

(.unwinged falcon
Strange as it is, it is a
wonderful messenger.
◊.cheetah bear ostrich.



(More About Cheetah Bear Land continued)

Chapter 3.riding and flying.

This chapter tells about the things you can ride on and fly on.

- Piper fish, see chapter 1)stats: top speed: 300miles per hour) weight able to carry: 300 pounds.) use: to hunt and explore in the under water world. Top age: 137 years. Top length: 12meters

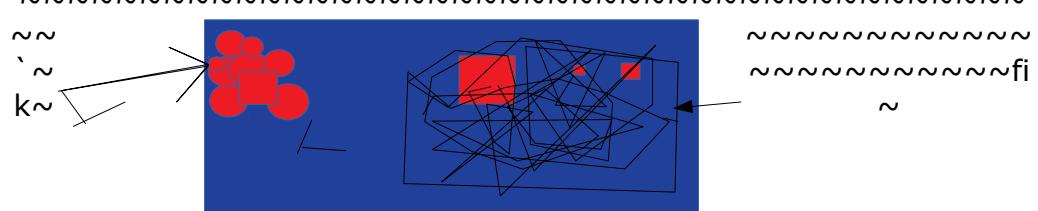
if you looked at the piper fish you wouldn't want to ride on it because... well... how about instead of telling you I'll let you see chapter 1 for yourself.) to ride it safely use a piper, see chapter 1) a type of saddle.

- Desert helper. Not actually used to ride on but are able to tow and give 299mi boosts to airplanes.

- Dragon. The best to fly and will only turn hostile if treated bad, when it age is 0-4 it will often have bad dreams and will come running to the youngest child's bed and cuddle with them, a dragon has a super cute face so if they accidentally wake them up I promise you there will no crying, when they turn 5 they will start to fly and have so great dreams they will start acting them out at breakfast. They will do the same thing every day from age 6-12, when they turn 13 they will take you for a ride on the first, forth, sixth and seventh day of each week.

They keep doing that until they turn 20, then they have to sleep next to your house but can carry you from Tifer to fik. Tifer and fik are countries, see below

~~~~~map of cheetah-bear land~~~~~



+ when they turn 29 they can fly from cheetah-bear land to the planet earth, see the trip below I mean on the next page, oops, well... never mind here's the trip.      Bing! Vup! Vorp! Bang! Wizzz

Sorry but I can't seem to the picture working right now lets try this,  
!save! Bing! Bong! Flick! Crank! There we go,  
look left!

To be continued...

*MORE ABOUT CHEETAH BEAR LAND  
IS NOT YET COMPLETE. THE AUTHOR  
NEEDS MORE TIME TO RESEARCH FOR  
ACCURACY. TENTATIVE RELEASE 2019.*

"I DIDN'T KNOW YOU  
LIKED HUGGING SO  
MUCH AARON!"



"WELL I DO WHEN IT IS  
A CONTEST!"



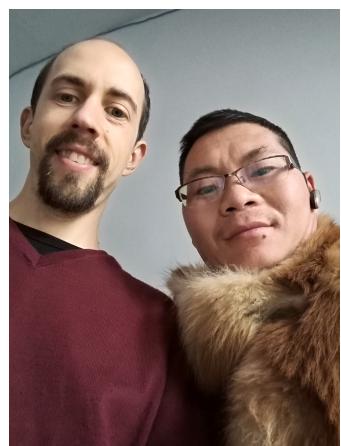
# Technology



**Secret Message**

"MAYBE CHILDREN AREN'T MEANT TO BE SOLVED LIKE MATHEMATICAL EQUATIONS. MAYBE, JUST MAYBE, THE LIFE OF A HUMAN BEING, THE LIFE OF A FAMILY, CAN'T BE ENCAPSULATED IN A BULLET-POINT LIST OF HOW-TO'S. AND THAT IS WHY I'M DONE. DONE WITH THEORIES, FORMULAS, AND LABELS. UTTERLY, COMPLETELY LAVISHLY DEPENDENT ON GRACE."

—JAMIE MARTIN, STEADY MOM'S FREEDOM GUIDE



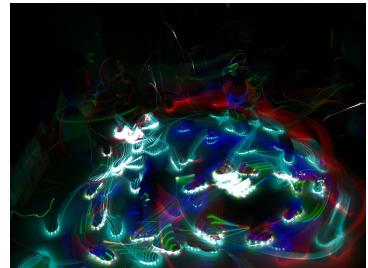
**Coolest  
Electrician  
Ever**



NOTHING BEATS  
PROGRAMMING LESSONS  
WITH DAD

## Awesome Easter Shoes

Grandma and Grandpa brought along some amazing shoes for the boys as part of their Easter present. These light up shoes offer choice of color pattern. ↗



## Science Experiments

One of the kids favorite parts of school this year has been science experiments. Simple experiments teach the scientific method and problem solving. And the favorite ones usually include food of some sort. ☺





“SOMETIMES YOU CAN’T SEE SOMETHING CLEARLY UNTIL YOU STEP AWAY FROM IT.”

—KATHERINE REAY, THE AUSTEN ESCAPE



“HEY ANDREW, MOM’S MAKING  
CHEESE AND CRACKERS FOR  
LUNCH!!!!”

ANDREW: “PINCH ME, SO I KNOW  
I’M NOT DREAMING.”



WEAR PINK!  
EVERY! DAY!



SOME OF THE  
BEST PARTS  
OF THE DAY



“Ceaseless prayer creates operational courage.” —Christi Gee, Revival

“Don’t be sorry,” Nate replied. “Be good. Be worthy of my trust. Be the best.”  
—S.D. Smith, The Last Archer

“Being in His Word is not something we do; it is something we live.”  
—Karen DeBues, Called Home

Mommy: “I like your pretty smile Abigail.”  
Abigail: “I like your eyebrows mommy.”

“Then God stepped in. He changed my plans. He turned my world upside down. Even when it was the hardest, most frightening task I had ever faced, He worked, leading me to places I never imagined with my family. Today, He continues to lead us.”  
—Karen DeBues, Called Home



You can ride a magic  
carpet any day you’d  
like around here.



SNUGGLES AND LITTLE HOUSE  
OUR FAVORITE WAY TO END THE  
WEEK

# Traditions



SUPER DAD!



SUPERTIME SLEEPING



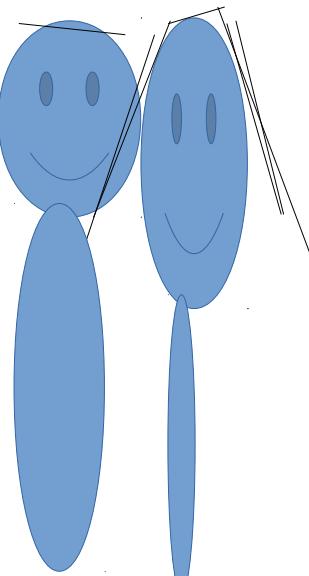
POETRY TEA TIME

“TRADITIONS ARE NOT MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PEOPLE THEY ARE INTENDED TO BLESS.”  
—CHAUTONA HAVIG,  
DISCOVERING HOPE

## The present for Anna

BY ALEXANDER  
Chapter 1 a mystery

Once upon a Time there was 3 boys Aaron Alexander Andrew  
And one girl Abigail parents Anna that's the mom Nate that's the dad  
it was Almost valentines day Alexander hid a present then it  
Was valentines day!



### Chapter 2 What is it

What is it Anna said I can't tell you it's a present for you  
on valentines day Alexander said

### Chapter 3 a Hint

walking up the path both of them saw so me paper it was colored blue  
it said  
I Am under a bed try to find the bed I Am under Anna thought  
they had to go on  
What?

As they walled through town Anna said where's the Bed said  
Alexander but it's not here

(End of Excerpt. This work is not yet completed.)



One of our favorite new experiences this year was enjoying local Spring Festival festivities with friends.



THE KIDS MADE ANNA BIRTHDAY BREAKFAST THIS YEAR. HOPING THAT BECOMES TRADITION.

Tn

The Family Times

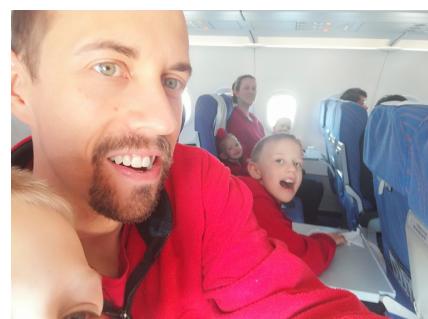
12/25/18

# Transportation



## TRANSPORTATION TACTICS

"I want a horse when I grow up, but I don't want to fall off of the horse and die. So I am going to tie the horse's reigns to my bicycle. That way the horse can pull me, I can ride, and not fall off." -Alexander



We take up a whole row on a regular airplane now.



### The Little Engine That Could

Our little clown-like car proved it could be trusted on far out countryside journeys and as a moving truck for 8 tables and 16+ chairs (also of diminutive proportioned of course). As long as you don't need to go to fast, it'll get you there.

## BACKSEAT

## BICKERING

"LISTEN TO ME! DON'T SQUISH BABY!" -ABIGAIL

## PRINCESS ABIGAIL IN HER CHARIOT

The little princess can sometimes be found zipping around Luoping in her trusty chariot, powered by her three strong brothers. Her gracious brothers actually love to perform this service for her and fight over who gets the toughest charioteering position. This is one of the ways trips to the fruit sellers are made more enjoyable. The other is to add in a stop for ice cream.



T

The Family Times

12/25/18

# Travel



## Hainan Getaway

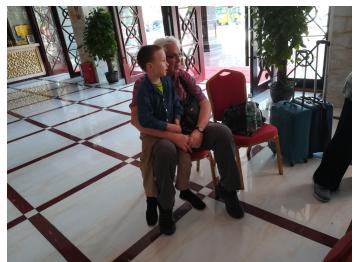
We had the privileged of traveling south to "China's Hawaii" for the wedding of our dear friend Omo and our new friend Paul. I was a great trip with a visit to the seaside, Western fast food restaurants, new Eastern foods, and the opportunity to visit with old and new friends. Alexander was especially excited as he got to see one of his favorite people on earth and regale his adoptive grandparents with tales of his imaginary worlds for hours. 

## THANKFUL FOR TRAVELERS

We are so thankful to have family willing to travel halfway around the world to see us. In 2018 we were blessed to have both sets of grandparents, and Aunt Dana and Great Grandma, make the long trip to our little city on the edge of the middle of nowhere. The kids especially look forward to the extra people to play with and the inevitable grand-kid spoiling.

This is the first year we have had guests for Easter and 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and both holidays were extra special to us because of our visitors.

We look forward to seeing if 2019 will bring any family out our way again. \*



# Wisconsin Wishes



**Moving, Moving**  
After countless goodbyes and a few last California adventures, Ben, Nicole, and family played a giant game of 3D Tetris and traded sun for snow. The California Cousins are now residents of the great state of Wisconsin. All of the stateside Rugg family is enjoying being closer together and gathering more frequently. Other benefits to living in Madison are the change of seasons, lower cost of living, more museums, and more co-working space options. The cousins think that perhaps the coolest feature of their new house, might actually be the treehouse.



## Evie's Class Camping Trip:



Evie was *NOT* Cold



**Packer's Family Night**  
Certifiable Cheeseheads Collectively Cheer

## Gold at the End of the Rainbow



Ben Finds Co-working Space of His Dreams

## Spectacular Snow

One of the coolest assets their new location has to offer is all of the snowy fun. The have already built snowmen, gone sledding, and made snow cream.



## CHEESY KITTENS



Wisconsin Ruggs get two kittens and name them Brie and Asiago